

Promoting Critical Intercultural Awareness Through The SFL Genre-Based Approach: A Collaborative Autoethnography of English Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract

This paper reports qualitative findings of a collaborative autoethnography regarding using SFL genre-based pedagogy to teach intercultural communication. It explores the collective self-reflection of three out of five researchers in this study. The pre-service teacher participants critically reflected on their experiences when participating in the Intercultural Communication Course using the SFL genre-based approach. The instruments are participants' collective self-narratives and experiences, so the data sources were themselves. In this way, we collaboratively and systematically collected, organized, and analyzed the experiences and activities that focused on promoting intercultural awareness during the 12 meetings under the SFL GBA. Drawing from critically self-reflective and dialogic among the participating researchers by expanding, being affirmed, and questioning each other's reflective writing reconstructing memories and experiences. The study may provide insightful findings to the scholars or EFL teachers in intercultural education. Hence, its implications can provide new insight into teaching practices for promoting critical intercultural awareness.

Keywords: AIEVM; critical intercultural awareness; metafunction; SFL-GBA; visual image.

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1. Introduction

For the last ten years, discussing promoting language learners' critical intercultural awareness (henceforth CIA) has been pivotal in multilingual and multicultural education. Scholars (e.g., Baker, 2015; Kusumaning, 2017; Susilo, 2023) emphasize the CIA as a reflective and critical approach to understanding and engaging with cultural differences since language and culture are inseparable. They argued that it involves developing an awareness of one's cultural assumptions, biases, and values, as well as an understanding of how these factors influence communication and interaction with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Tran and Duong (2018) argued that the CIA helps students become aware of their own and other cultures and respect their differences. In line with this, Byram (2021) stated that the CIA could help language learners communicate successfully by fostering understanding between parties, promoting the investigation of various viewpoints, and preserving communication with other language users. In this respect, considering an appropriate teaching approach becomes crucial in promoting language learners' CIA.

Infusing cultural content in language teaching was considered demanding for language teachers in the Indonesian context, significantly boosting CIA (Kusumaning, 2017). Gandana (2015) reported that integrating cultural aspects into syllabi and classroom practices was challenging due to the limited time and a busy curriculum. By this challenge, previous studies have been conducted to overcome it. Kusumaning and Widodo (2017) used digital photo-mediated cross-cultural assignments to support students in developing a critical understanding of the cultural realities represented in the images they viewed online. The study revealed that digital photos and intercultural tasks in culturally rich learning materials may help students' ICC in English language classes. Andi Susilo (2023) shows that intercultural assignments aided by visual images help students enhance their capacity to recognize, understand, and assess the intercultural values contained within the images. The research also demonstrated that ethnicity, gender, and academic specialization had no appreciable impact on the CIA's growth. Mahaputri et al (2024) recently promoted a blueprint as a learning design for teaching

intercultural communication using Instagram as a virtual learning platform.

Despite a myriad of previous studies investigating the CIA in the area of pedagogy of English, none of the studies reported the implementation of SFL GBA, which is mandated in the Indonesian National Curriculum (Noviyenty & Morganna, 2020; Munandar & Newton, 2021; Susilo et al, 2023), to promote CIA. Moreover, underpinned by the SFL theory brought by Halliday (1978), a genre pedagogy that highlighted the social contexts are semiotically structured along three dimensions, according to metafunctional analysis. This means that every text, including the visual image, contains linguistic choices that interpret events (ideational meanings), roles and relationships (interpersonal meanings), and the communication channel (textual meanings). Hence, to fill the space, this study reported how the participants' experiences in the teaching-learning cycle under SFL GBA enabled them to promote CIA. Further, the research questions that guided this study were as follows:

- 1) how does the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Genre-based approach contribute to promoting critical intercultural awareness and provide new insight among English pre-service teachers?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Critical Intercultural Awareness

Critical intercultural awareness (CIA) emphasizes understanding and appreciating one's own and the target culture to be broader with a translingual framework (Baker, 2015). Susilo (2023) argued that the CIA is divided into conceptual and practical perspectives. The former focuses on viewing things from intercultural perspectives, acknowledging two cultures: one's own and the culture being engaged when 'our' and 'other' cultures are compared in a broad, potentially stereotyped way with minimal knowledge of intercultural communication; awareness is demonstrated. This is studied at the level of cultural awareness regarding cultural awareness. At level 1, the context of cultural awareness is still in the form of culture as a set of shared behaviors, beliefs, and values from two cultures, which usually still have a local understanding. Meanwhile at level 2, advanced cultural awareness, cultural awareness combines more complicated understanding such as cultural knowledge, which leads to different communication so that the cultural awareness obtained is the similarities between certain cultures as well as awareness of the possibilities of incompatibility and miscommunication between certain cultures (Baker, 2022). In the meantime, Baker (2022), adapted from Baker (2015), stated that the CIA transcends the topic of understanding into more comprehend cultures, languages. This is the main reason for selecting level 3 as the primary study emphasis. And it can be shown :

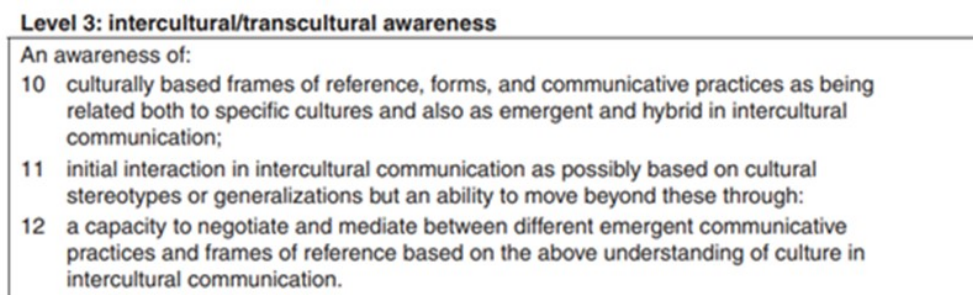


Figure 1. The twelve component of intercultural awareness (adapted from Baker, 2015a: 164)

- understanding culturally based frames of reference and communicative practices,
- understanding initial interaction based on cultural stereotypes,
- moving beyond these through negotiation and mediation,
- understanding and negotiating between different emergent communicative practices.

At level 3, intercultural awareness transcends the 'our/other' culture dichotomy and encompasses cultures, languages, and communication not limited to a specific native-speaker community (Baker, 2015, p. 166). In this way, students will interpret critical intercultural awareness as tools to gain insight into cultural understanding based not only on being within the cultural community. In line with the CIA, this refers to the ability to evaluate critically and based on explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries (Nugent, 2015). It is an essential component of intercultural communicative competence. It encourages language educators to craft learning opportunities that guide learners in observing clear connections between classroom lessons and real-world issues while exercising critical thinking skills throughout the process (Nugent, 2015).

Developing critical intercultural awareness in a classroom setting is crucial for students to simultaneously gain cultural and linguistic knowledge, preparing them for appropriate intercultural interactions in diverse sociocultural contexts (Handoyo, 2018). Students understand culture as a set of shared behaviors, ideas, and values, then progress to seeing culture as relative, continuously changing norms, and developing the capacity to negotiate and manage sophisticated intercultural exchanges (Susilo, 2023). This is also shown in the application of intercultural competence, which shows that the CIA has the ability to evaluate sociocultural realities using explicit criteria, views, behaviors, and products from one's own and other cultures and countries (Byram, 1997). The conclusion is that CIA involves understanding culture as shared behaviors, ideas, and values and applying intercultural competence to evaluate sociocultural realities using clear criteria, enabling students to develop critical intercultural awareness and prepare for diverse interactions.

2.2 SFL Genre-Based Approach

Genre theory in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) emerged in Australia in the 1980s and was originally by Jim Martin and Joan Rothery (Martin, 1992; Christie, 2013). Within the framework of SFL, language is conceptualized as a social semiotic system that occupies a central position in comprehending social context (Halliday, 1978). Through the application of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, it is anticipated that an envisaged outcome is the realization of the "metafunctional principle that meaning is at once both doing and understanding," as articulated by Halliday (1993, p. 100). Halliday (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) further augmented this notion by asserting that the metafunctional aspect constitutes the primary lexicogrammatical foundation in any language, encompassing experience, relationships, and structure. In SFL terms, these metafunctions are called Field, Tenor, and Mode, while in grammar, they are called Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual dimensions (Kiernan, 2018). The field focuses on content, represented through grammatical patterns and vocabulary indicating "who does what to whom." Tenor concerns the roles and relationships among participants, expressed through interpersonal metafunction elements like mood and modality. Lastly, Mode pertains to the communication channel, whether spoken or written and is associated with the textual metafunction, involving information organization through theme and structure. This framework enhances our understanding of how language conveys information, establishes social connections, and effectively structures communication (Van Hoang, 2021).

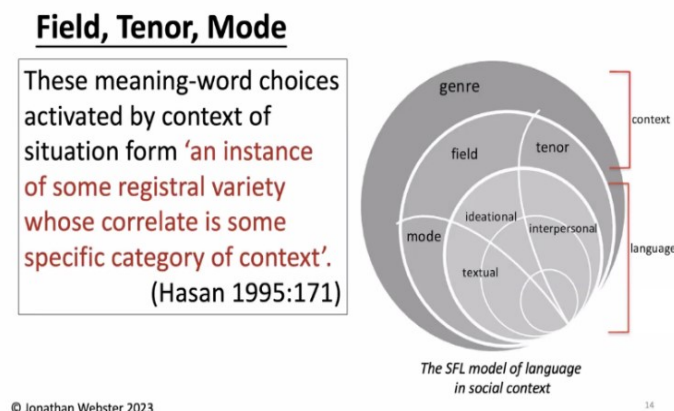


Figure 2. Field, Tenor, Mode

The SFL genre approach is theoretically and pedagogically structured. It is a communicative tool strategically oriented towards specific goals, adhering to a sequential progression of diverse genres. This approach establishes systematic connections between language and social context (Swales, 1990; Martin, 1992; Halliday, 1994). The genre-based pedagogy approach within the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework holds significance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The approach addresses various text types in this educational context, including reports, recounts, procedures, and exposition (Martin, 1992; Hyland, 2007; Zai & Razali, 2023).

The TLC instruction within Genre-based pedagogy comprises four sequential stages: 1) building knowledge of the field (BKoF), 2) deconstruction, 3) joint construction, and 4) independent construction (Martin, 1992). BkoF is the first stage in SFL GBA learning, where students discuss and explore basic knowledge by connecting their prior knowledge with the topic to learn (Suharyadi, 2020). During the deconstruction stage, the teacher imparts comprehension of the targeted genre model, which is the focus of learning in helping students explore the social purpose of a text, structure, and language features. In the subsequent stage, referred to as the joint construction,

the teacher collaborates with students to collectively analyze and synthesize a text within a specific genre, drawing upon shared knowledge of the context and the structural elements and features characteristic of the genre. Following the acquisition of comprehension during the initial two stages of genre instruction, students independent construction the text during the subsequent phase (Horarik, 2002).

The Teaching Learning Cycle (TLC) approach positively accelerates students' understanding of the SFL GBA by using an approach tailored to students' individual needs (Nagao, 2020). This results in more structured and focused learning. In addition, TLC also improves students' critical thinking skills and encourages changes in teachers' teaching practices that are more oriented towards the application of knowledge (Jinkins, 2001). Then in learning, visual images are often used as learning concepts (Bader, 2019) and are adapted using digital technology. In line with what Gracia and Lindner (2021) said that learning with visual media can help in Foreign Learning Education (FLE), which is also quoted from the introduction to *The Mind's Eye: Using Images Creatively in Language Learning* (Maley et al, 1980) "This is because pictures do not express anything in words, so much can be said in words about them." Collin (2012: 2, as cited in Buckley & Nerantzi, 2020) added that with visualization, you can communicate complex concepts effectively so that information is easier to understand and develop into something interesting.

3. Methodology

In this study, we adopted an auto-ethnography approach to explore personal experience within the cultural context, combined with autobio with ethnography (Ellis, 2004; Chang, et al, 2016; Lapadat, 2017). Ten participants (7 female, 3 male) initially participated in the intercultural communication course conducted in 12 meetings from June to November 2023.

In this study, self-narratives were the primary data source, enhanced by visual images depicting experiences during participation in the Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) course. As outlined in Susilo (2023), we ultimately organized our findings into three main topics: 1) viewing things from a different cultural perspective, 2) acknowledging similarities and differences between different cultures, and 3) engaging with other cultures through writing an autobiography, where each author (three of the five authors) wrote self-reflectively while following the course, then reconstructed and combined it into the main topic to effectively communicate across different cultures and succeed in intercultural interactions. Therefore, this methodology enables us to consolidate and evaluate research findings while emphasizing essential aspects for fostering critical intercultural awareness within the specific learning context.

The data regarding image analysis was collected from three self-reflective autobiographies originating from the Google Arts and Culture page. Taking and creating the autobiography took 12 weeks, from building knowledge to creating the text that will be used as a data source. All the data gathered were analyzed by expanding, being affirmed, and questioning each other's reflective writing reconstructing memories and experiences. Accordingly, the findings were drawn from critical self-reflective and dialogic among the participating researchers.

4. Findings

The findings of this autoethnography highlight the experiences of three participants while attending intercultural communication classes to increase critical intercultural awareness. Several themes emerged through the narrative analysis and personal reflection by highlighting how individuals navigate cultural diversity, sense of belonging, and identity with other cultures.

4.1 Viewing Things From a Different Cultural Perspective

The BKoF stage is the beginning of learning using the TLC method as proposed by Martin (1992) in intercultural learning, it provides a broader picture and insight for participants in forming/developing new perspectives on culture itself (Rapanta, & Trovão, 2021).

In the beginning of the ICC course, based on the TLC learning model by Martin (1992), there is a term known as BKoF. Our lecturer introduces ICC by inviting people to build knowledge together so that the result is interest and self-awareness in studying culture through ICC.

Anitha : "Through this self-awareness, I became interested in studying cultural differences at home and abroad. I continue to explore culture is a set of beliefs and values that is embedded in community life and becomes a self-identity and I realize having an awareness of criticizing certain cultures through various perspectives leads to emphasize understanding and appreciating culture (Baker, 2015)"

Vhirza : "I previously thought culture was just visible as an identity of a particular individual or group. However, it turns out that culture is more than what I mentioned, it has become more enjoyable for me to have more discussion about culture"

Quinni : "From a young age, I felt very interested in the culture of Indonesia because it is unique and diverse. This also led me to study my own culture more deeply... As time passes, technology and the internet have become more widespread, and information is also straightforward to obtain, making me more familiar with foreign cultures. I also studied in the English Education study program, which studied education, language, and culture. During the 6th semester, I had the opportunity to take the Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) class. Therefore, I can better understand and accept the new culture I encounter."

In the process of building knowledge, the participant has new insights that lead them to believe that culture is a set of beliefs and values that are embedded in community life and become a self-identity. At this point not only new insight gained from the first encounter learning ICC that so many reaction from each other participant.

Anitha : "This experience moved me to describe how to see things from the perspective of a different culture. However, I have difficulty describing what I have gained after criticizing culture from a different perspective. Questions like "What is there to criticize?" or "What perspective should be explained?" emerged within me until I took a class for 12 weeks to study intercultural communication."

Meanwhile Vhirza shared about her first impression in this course : " I was like, woah! It turns out that culture has many aspects, not just typical clothing, typical places, or typical food. During learning, we were given new insights by sharing what we already knew about other countries' cultures and then comparing them with each other."

On the other hand Quinni highlighted the new insight that gained in the first meeting : "During the opening meeting of the ICC class, I learned that culture is divided into several things which are also called The Cultural Iceberg in the Theory of Culture. Culture is not only visible or inherent but also invisible things such as the beliefs of a person's heart"

At the BKoF stage, participants study culture through various media, such as videos on YouTube and several pictures shown by the lecturer. In this learning process, participants are invited to analyze the culture from a broader perspective and are also introduced to etic and emic perspectives in assessing culture.

Anitha : "This course taught me culture is diverse; it can be seen directly, but it can also be invisible, such as people's beliefs and habits, as demonstrated by the custom of greeting people differently in different countries."

Meanwhile Quinni said, "...Even though we already hold a culture that is inherent to us, we also still interpret new cultures when communicating. For example, when given a video example of Malala Yousafzai talking about Gender Inequality and Change, participants were asked by the instructor to discuss what issue Malala was talking about, then what emics were conveyed, what ethics emerged, and what attitude would be applied."

After several weeks of introducing culture through the building knowledge stage, the next step is looking for material to analyze in this lesson. Our lecturer suggests that Google Arts and Culture be the main source for looking for images of artifacts related to culture.

Anittha : "I visited the Google Arts and Culture page. There are many pictures of the culture there, but I only chose the ones I thought were interesting"

On the Google Arts and Culture page, the participant can see many images about culture from various parts of the world, but the participant chose one image that, when analyzed, gave the participant a new perspective on culture in different countries, as was the initial goal of understanding CIA to gain a new perspective.

Anitha : "I found pictures of girls wearing hijabs attending international forums with feminist content. I think this picture is interesting because after finding out more deeply, the children attend a school in the UK, which, as we know, western countries are pretty sensitive to people who have typical Middle Eastern physical characteristics (high nose, olive skin color, wearing long clothes and hijab)"

The new perspective that participants get is in the form of how harmful stereotyping tries to compartmentalize a person's physical appearance. This is something that will not happen if we understand culture through the CIA's lens. In this way, students will interpret critical intercultural awareness as a tool to gain insight into cultural understanding based not only on being within the cultural community delivered by Baker (2022).

Anitha : "This certainly adds to my insight into seeing the broader world because many people out there stereotype that someone who speaks out loud about feminism is described as a rebel, but in reality,

the freedom to voice opinions related to feminism does not look at the physical appearance. This made me realize that a few weeks ago, studying the harmful effects of stereotyping and negative labels on someone or a group, there is an understanding that these actions can happen if we do not understand the culture and do not respect other cultures”

Unlike other participants who gained a new perspective by studying the culture of another country.

Vhirza : “Japan always has self-expression in any way, even through comics, whereas in Indonesia the prosperity of having a job as a writer published by a major publisher is still considered lacking, so to self-publish you must have enough loyal readers.”

This is the same perspective that Quinni takes from studying culture

Quinni : “Wedding customs can be different even though the goal is the same to get married. It's not just customs in different countries, one country also has different wedding customs according to the region or culture inherent in that society.”

Through a broader understanding of culture from the practice of ICC and CIA theory, there is concrete evidence that this theory gives participants new insight into culture so they can see culture with a broader view and also helps participants to write auto-ethno texts independently through SFL GBA guidelines. as the final stage of BKoF.

Anitha : “It selected the parts that need to be highlighted, such as depictions from different cultural perspectives, sharpening my knowledge about critical intercultural awareness, and detailing them in the well-made autobiography. This stage took the most time due to the information I got. I also constructed the writing into a series of stories to produce an autobiography using the SFL GBA guidelines”

Then what participants got after following the 12-week ICC course were new experiences and insights about the ease of creating auto-ethno text using the SFL GBA guidelines.

Anitha : “After I was sure that I would write all my experiences into an autobiography, I started by studying the structure of the autobiography, the lexicogrammatical used, and the function of the text (field, tenor, and mode) adapted from Kiernan, 2018. Going through the SFL GBA guidelines made it easier for me to write an autobiography as the final product of the class.”

4.2 Acknowledging Similarities and Differences Between Different Cultures

Intercultural learning uses the SFL GBA theory by Halliday (1978) in increasing critical intercultural awareness (Baker, 2015) through self-reflection after being given knowledge about culture at the BKoF stage which then encourages us to reflect on our experiences through the second learning stage, namely deconstruction and joint construction by exploring cultural differences and similarities in different cultural environments, we show interest in comparisons between aspects of our culture and other cultures that interest us, which are presented in the form of infographics as part of learning instructions as suggested by Baker (2015) to explore the relationships between culture. This process helps us to increase critical awareness of interculturality (Susilo, 2023)

Vhirza : “The teacher gave me the task of finding out more about the culture that I thought was interesting and then comparing it with other countries using infographics as a comparison medium. I was interested in comparing Japanese and Indonesian culture.s”

Quinni : “I was interested in the wedding customs in three countries I met, which I thought were unique.”

Anitha : “I was interested in studying culture to gain a new perspective for assessing culture.”



Figure 3. Infographic of wedding customs around the world by Quinni

Openness and curiosity are used as two attributes that show the presence of the CIA as in Susilo (2023) in recognizing cultural similarities through our cultural exploration. This process helps and encourages our motivation to learn and gain new insights through reflective exploration of our culture with other cultures, resulting in greater learning and acceptance in appreciating cultural diversity.

Vhirza : "I found similarities between Japanese and Indonesian cultures, namely table manners. Japan and Indonesia uphold good manners, even at the dinner table despite their different beliefs or religion."

Quinni : "I understood that Ukrainians choose autumn is considered good and aligns with family and other celebrations. In my culture, calculating the weton date is appropriate and suitable for a wedding ceremony. We should continue the traditions of our ancestors and have a good day at the wedding because getting married is a once-in-a-life-time sacred and holy moment."

Anitha : "Studying the harmful effect of stereotyping and negative labels on someone or a group, there's the understanding that these actions can happen if we don't understand the culture and don't respect other culture."

As we understand culture, and recognize the similarities and differences between one culture and another, we find moments of cultural encounter where we can better respect and accept a culture with a different point of view. Appreciating cultural differences and taking new perspectives by respecting unique aspects, as well as fostering a sense of inclusiveness as stated by Baker (2022) that culture is a set of behaviors, ideas, and values that then develop into a norm that continues to change. As Vhirza highlighted the moment of her encounter with another culture by providing prejudice at first, then taking a new perspective when going through the process of understanding and criticizing:

"The cultures that I initially thought were quite 'strange', then after hearing the meaning behind these cultures, I finally understood. The word 'strange' in my mind changed to 'unique', and it made me understand that the formation of a culture owned by a group has its history and meaning."

The use and development of social media as a place to obtain information is an influential factor in developing intercultural awareness and cultural change factors (Leaver et al, 2020; Susilo, 2023; Mahaputri et al, 2024), Vhirza discovered how different her culture is from other cultures are seen as contrasting regarding stereotypes of women in the context of "expressing themselves", through a critical process she realizes that there are cultural changes in that context that can break the inherent stereotypes.

“This is because there’s a stereotype that states if a woman confesses love considered a cheap woman, whereas in Japan this seems to be a common thing. Here I can see that it’s difficult for women to freely express themselves because of the stereotypes and stigma attached to women in Indonesia. I feel that the development of social media is a factor in cultural change and this cultural change can be a resolution to break the stereotypes attached to women in Indonesia.”

In navigating using SFL-GBA in cultivating critical awareness of cultural diversity, Vhirza showed her reflection through the process of critical reflection on how cultural diversity influenced the openness of their feelings and formed a new cultural identity within herself.

“While discussing cultures from other countries, I realized that even in the same region as Asia or in the region I lived in, for example, even though they look the same, they may have differences and similarities in their respective cultures depending on the events that occur the history, hereditary culture, cultural acculturation, or reasons that can’t be identified with the naked eyes.”

Vhirza also highlighted how she developed her critical awareness by eliminating ethnocentrism which assumes that some cultures and standards are superior and correct (Barbuto Jr et al., 2015, p.270 in Susilo, 2023) as well as stereotypical thinking about cross-cultural differences (Susilo, 2023).

“By exploring other cultures, it’s not easy for me to develop prejudice, which can make me defensive, ignorant, underestimate or attack other cultures, especially through the internet.” She added, “Awareness of cultural differences makes me more curious. So, we can realize that not all foreign cultures are wrong, and not all of our culture is the most superior and good culture.”

4.3 Engaging With Other Cultures Through Writing an Autobiography

Within this theme, we use the Systemic Functional Linguistic Genre-Based Approach (SFL-GBA) to reflect on our experiences of engaging with interculturality through an autobiographical lens. We use the autoethnography method which is used to tell curiosity about our own culture, educate ourselves, research and study, build relationships, respect cultural differences, reflect on our own culture, self-reflection, and continuously learn & adapt to write in one narrative theme.

As citizens of Indonesia, which has a unique and diverse culture, we are especially interested in our own culture. We also felt curious about our own culture, namely Javanese culture. One of us even got involved in studying culture because of that curiosity and interest.

Quinni : “I learned about culture through existing arts such as gamelan music, which I learned when I was in elementary school, and traditional dance, which I studied from Middle School to High School.”

Therefore, we have the opportunity in semester 6 to study Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC), so that we can understand and accept the new culture we encounter. At the beginning of learning, we each had a variety of understandings about culture, such as:

Quinni said that, “Culture is an identity attached to a region or to humans,” Vhirza said “Culture was just visible as an identity of a particular individual or group; for example, kebaya is traditional clothing from Indonesia, kimchi, which is a typical South Korean food, and Geisha are entertainers from Japan.” meanwhile Anitha said, “culture is a set of beliefs and values that which is embedded in community life and becomes a self-identity.”

After we attended the introduction class at the beginning of the meeting, we got information about culture divided into several parts or what is called The Cultural Iceberg in the theory of culture. As mentioned by Edward T. Hall (in McKay-Semmler, 2017) culture is divided into visible (communication that is explicit and can be seen clearly), less visible (nonverbal communication from the immediate environment to participants in certain interactions), and not visible (communication in a way implicit or implied thoughts or beliefs of the person). Because culture is a complex concept, it can influence humans in communication (Raef et al, 2020).

Then we went through 12 meetings where each meeting was structured systemically following 4 stages of Genre. Making an autobiography is in the final stage, namely independent construction, which of course makes participants directly involved in various cultures to be able to reflect on themselves. Before making it, we were asked to look for an image that was interesting to us as participants that contained holidays, rituals, faith beliefs, or unique customs whose culture could be analyzed on the Google Art and Culture website.

Anitha found a picture of a female student wearing hijabs attending international forums, where the school was in the UK, she felt interested because Western countries are very sensitive to the appearance of Middle Eastern who wear long clothes and hijabs, as well as their physical appearance.

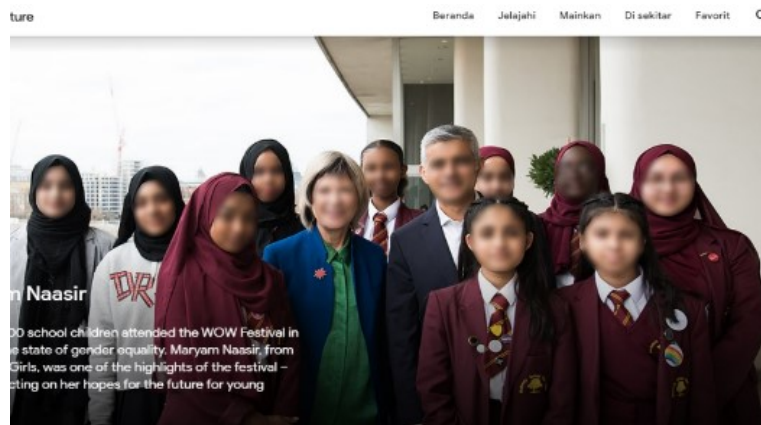


Figure 4. “What Do Young Feminist Want for the Future” By WOW – Women of The World Foundation
Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/MwUx9Rumpa5GBg>

Vhirza found a picture of people cosplaying anime or Japanese animation which has become a regular event for anime lovers almost all over the world. She feels interested in the cosplay phenomenon because it is an interpretation of anime, where she likes anime and its fictional literature which in Japan is called manga. So she can recognize Japanese culture from there.



Figure 5. "Dōjinshi and The Comic Market" By Ministry of Economy, Trade & Industry.
Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/IAVhhYnMHGQxLA>

Quinni found a picture of a Ukrainian family photo on their wedding day, she felt interested because there was a little explanation that many weddings in Ukraine are held in autumn.



Figure 6. "Ukrainian Seasonal Traditions" By CFC Big Ideas in association with the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy. Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/AQXx-F-HXG2nsQ>

After getting the image, participants began to make self-reflection first with questions which are packaged in AIEVM, which is a learning tool so that students are critically involved through images as a medium that they often encounter from all over the world, with structured reflection at meetings with the teacher through these images (Barret, Byram, Iprgrave, & Seurrat, 2013; Lindner, & Gracia, 2014). The first question starts with reflection on ourselves and our culture, and how other people view ourselves using mindmister. Then several self-reflection questions related to the selected image. It is hoped that participants will be able to relate one event to another event and be able to interpret their own culture and other cultures. So that participants can feel and interpret their cultural awareness by looking at particular events from various angles. It is also supported by Susilo (2023) and Byram (1997) that in understanding culture, students apply the ability to see and interpret culture from various sides so that they can apply intercultural competence.

Vhirza : "AIEVM helped me to analyze and explore more of the meaning of the culture in the image and also reflect on what I felt when I saw the image by seeing, imagining, and feeling the point of view from different cultures critically (it is also supported by Méndez-García & Cores-Bilbao, 2023)."

From in-depth self-reflection using AIEVM, an autobiographical work was formed that combines the author's personal experience with the richness of his or her culture and other cultures depicted in visual media that has been chosen by each author via the Google Art and Culture website. Adapted by Kiernan (2018), the autobiography is written according to SFL GBA to make it more structured and make it easier for students to produce the text, by paying attention to structure, lexicogrammatical, and the function of the text (field, tenor, and mode).

Anitha : "After I was sure that I would write all my experiences into an autobiography, I started by studying the structure of the autobiography, the lexicogrammatical used, and the function of the text (field, tenor, and mode) adapted from Kiernan (2018). Going through the SFL GBA guidelines made it easier for me to write an autobiography as the final product of the class. What I felt while making autobiographical text using SFL GBA made my text more structured."

So in this article, autobiography becomes a medium for exploring cultural encounters that occurred in the author's life journey, not just a narrative about his life. Through the process of writing this autobiography, the author began to understand how important it is to have critical intercultural awareness. This awareness emerged when the author reflected on how different cultures interact with each other in his life, and how a deeper understanding of these differences can form a broader and more inclusive perspective. As Quinni summed up his experience of engaging in visual images of Ukrainian weddings in creating an autobiography:

"After self-reflection and looking for more information, I understood that Ukrainians choose autumn. It is considered good and aligns with family and other celebrations. In my culture, calculating the Weton Date (Cirebon Javanese calendar) is appropriate and suitable for a wedding ceremony. We should continue

the traditions of our ancestors and have a good day at the wedding ceremony because getting married is a once-in-a-lifetime sacred and holy moment.”

Therefore, this autobiography is not only a reflection of the author's life, but also a lens that reveals the complexity and beauty of the combination of various cultures. This process results in the author's involvement in their own culture and other cultures so that critical intercultural awareness is formed in each author which is expressed through the autobiographical text created.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This article's discussion section can expand upon the implications and significance of the findings. The collaborative autoethnographic study on employing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) genre-based pedagogy to teach intercultural communication has yielded valuable insights into the practical application of this approach and the dynamics of collaborative self-reflection among participants.

The findings of our study underscore the potential effectiveness of SFL genre-based pedagogy in cultivating intercultural awareness among student-teachers. Through their collective self-reflection, participants highlighted how engaging with SFL frameworks facilitated their understanding of cultural communication patterns and norms. This suggests that integrating SFL genre-based pedagogy into intercultural communication courses can offer a structured framework for students to analyze and navigate diverse cultural contexts. In line with Walsh Marr's research (2019, as cited in Hendriwanto et al., 2022) state that using SFL pedagogy in learning can improve students' thinking.

Central to our methodology was the process of collaborative self-reflection (Ellis, 2004) among researchers. By critically engaging with each other's narratives and experiences, participants deepened their understanding of intercultural communication and enriched the data collection process. This dialogic approach fostered a sense of reflexivity and allowed for exploring diverse perspectives within the research team.

The insights gained from this study hold significant implications for scholars and practitioners in intercultural education. By emphasizing the importance of critical self-reflection and dialogic engagement, our findings suggest that educators can adopt similar collaborative approaches to enhance the effectiveness of intercultural communication pedagogy. Moreover, integrating SFL genre-based frameworks can offer a structured methodology for teaching intercultural communication skills in diverse educational settings.

Despite the valuable insights this study provides, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. The sample size, consisting of three out of five researchers, may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could seek to expand the participant pool and incorporate diverse perspectives to enrich the analysis further. Additionally, longitudinal studies could explore the long-term impact of SFL genre-based pedagogy on students' intercultural competence development (Trojan, 2022).

In conclusion, this collaborative autoethnographic study offers valuable contributions to intercultural education (Chi & Kulich, 2022; Egitim & Sandu, 2023) by highlighting the effectiveness of SFL genre-based pedagogy (Uzun & Zehir, 2020) and the importance of collaborative self-reflection. By embracing these insights, educators can strive to create more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that foster critical intercultural awareness among students.

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